

AN UNDESCRIBED PANAMANIAN VACCINIUM: *VACCINIUM BOCATORENSIS* (ERICACEAE)

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Among the strikingly different species still being discovered along the relatively uncollected Caribbean slope of Panama is a vaccinioid unlike any previously described from Central America. In view of the recent attention played to this group of plants in Panama (Wilbur and Luteyn 1978, 1981), these continuing discoveries are surprising. They emphasize the need for critical collecting even in an area as intensively explored botanically as Panama, a country blessed with the most recent flora of any Central American nation as well as the most intensive collecting of any country in the area—a continuing program that reportedly has resulted in over 300,000 collections.

VACCINIUM bocatorensis Wilbur, sp. nov.

Frutex ut videtur epiphyticus, plus minusve scandens. Petioli 2–3 mm longi. Laminae foliorum coriaceae, integrae, ovatae vel ovato-ellipticae, 4–6.5 cm longae et 3.5–5 cm latae, apice rotundatae, basi rotundatae et cordatae, pinnatinerviae. Inflorescentia racemosa vel subcorymbosa; rhachis 2–5 cm longa, pilosula; bractae florales lanceolatae vel lanceo-ovatae, 3–6 mm longae; pedicelli puberulenti eglandulari, 10–15(20) mm longi. Calyx et hypanthium 7–10 mm longus et ca 6 mm diametro, cylindricus, pilosulus; lobi calycis 4–5 mm longi. Corolla carnosae tuba cylindrica, glabra extra, tomentosa intra distalis; lobi corollae 2 mm longi et 2.5 mm lati. Stamina 5 mm longa; filamenta ca 2.5 mm longa, moderate vel dense sericea; antherae ca 3 mm longae, tubulis 2, 1–1.2 mm longis. Stylus ca 7 mm longus, glaber.

Reportedly an epiphytic, scandent treelet. Mature stems drying brownish, \pm terete; bark thin, longitudinally splitting. Leaves coriaceous, entire, ovate to ovate-elliptic, 4–6.5 cm long \times 3.5–5 cm wide, basally rounded and slightly cordate, apically \pm rounded, glabrous above and moderately but inconspicuously erect-pilosulose beneath with widely spaced, slender, hyaline trichomes 0.2–0.3 mm long, apparently eglandular; venation pinnate with 3 pair of lateral veins arising within 5–10 mm of the base, the midvein and secondary veins impressed above and elevated beneath but the tertiary venation not apparent; petiole 2–3 mm long, shortly puberulent adaxially, \pm glabrous abaxially. Inflorescence axillary but congregated distally and sometimes appearing

terminal, racemose to subcorymbose, 6–12-flowered, 3–7 cm long; rachis 2–5 cm long, \pm terete, moderately and inconspicuously pilosulose; floral bracts lanceolate to lance-ovate, acute to acuminate, sparingly puberulent to pilosulose externally, 3–6 mm long; bracteoles borne on the proximal third of the pedicel, lanceolate to lance-oblong, 4–6 mm long and 0.6–1.5(1.8) mm wide, adaxially glabrous and abaxially sparingly puberulent to pilosulose and marginally ciliate; pedicels terete, densely but inconspicuously puberulent with erect hyaline trichomes, striate, eglandular, 10–15(20) mm long and about 1 mm in diameter, articulate with the flower. Calyx (and hypanthium) 7–10 mm long and about 6 mm in diameter, inconspicuously and moderately pilosulose with spreading erect trichomes, “purplish red,” the hypanthium broadly cylindrical, pilosulose and glandular-pustulate throughout, the calyx lobes narrowly triangular to lanceolate, spreading recurved or reflexed, 4–5 mm long and about 2–3 mm wide at base; corolla thick and fleshy, 7–9 mm long and 6–7 mm in diameter, externally glabrous, internally glabrous or very nearly so for the basal half and increasingly tangled pilose distally and the broadly deltoid lobes exceedingly densely matted tomentose and about 2 mm long and 2.5 mm wide at base, “livid red” externally; stamens about 5 mm long, the filaments very weakly connate basally, very much flattened and rather broad, about 2.5 mm long and medially about 0.5 mm wide, marginally and on both surfaces moderately to densely sericeous especially on the connective abaxially, the anthers golden, finely or moderately granular, about 3 mm long, strongly incurved basally, the tubules 2/anther and each 1–1.2 mm long, about as wide as the thecae, glabrous, dehiscent by obliquely introrse pores; style included, glabrous, about 7 mm long.

TYPE: PANAMA. Bocas del Toro: headwaters of Rio Colubre, 2400–2550 m (Colubre Camp), 3 Mar 1984, L.D. Gomez, I. Chacon, G. Davids & G. Herrera 22368 (HOLOTYPE: DUKE; ISOTYPE: MO).

Generic limits within the vaccinioid ericads are not as precise as might be implied or expected and the placement of this species is not above question. It is here placed in the genus *Vaccinium* because of certain resemblances in shape and pubescence of the corolla and of the androecium to such species as *Vaccinium poasanum* Donn. Sm., *V. floccosum* (L.O. Wms.) Wilbur & Luteyn and even *V. jefensis* Luteyn & Wilbur. At first glance it might equally be placed in the neotropical genus *Macleanea* but its relatively short corolla and very short antherial tubules and finely granular thecae suggest a closer relationship with the very diverse genus *Vaccinium*. A broadly based reappraisal of generic limits within the vaccinioid ericads seems very much overdue, and until completed, generic placement will in

large part be rather speculative. In reference to this it should be noted that this species belongs in the same complex of species that has engendered a continuing debate as to the validity of the segregate genus *Symphysia* (Vander Kloet 1985).

REFERENCES

- VANDER KLOET, S. P. 1985. On the generic status of *Symphysia*. *Taxon* 34:440-447.
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